

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 BNDD-05 CIAE-00 INR-09 IO-12 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-07 TRSE-00 USIA-12 NSC-10

SCI-06 OMB-01 SS-14 DODE-00 PA-03 PRS-01 EUR-25 /126 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/ APU: KNROGERS: DEB

3/26/73 EXT 28148

APPROVED BY ARA/ APU: WPSTEDMAN, JR.

ARA: GLISTER

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R 262232 Z MAR 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

UNCLAS STATE 055494

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: SNAR, PA

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL NARCOTICS REPORT ISSUED

1. CONGRESSMAN MURPHY AND STEELE ISSUED MARCH 21 REPORT OF STUDY MISSION TO LATIN AMERICA AND GERMANY ON NARCOTICS MATTERS. SUMMARY OF PERTINENT PART CONCERNING PARAGUAY FOLLOWS.

2. FRANCO TOSCONINO, WHO IS WANTED FOR MURDER OF A POLICE-MAN IN ITALY, IS THOUGHT TO HAVE INHERITED THE OPERATION OF AUGUSTE JOSEPH RICORD WHO IS PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT SMUGGLER ARRESTED TO DATE. RICORD IS A FRENCH CORSICAN WHO WAS IN PRISON IN ASUNCION FOR 17 MONTHS PRIOR TO HIS EXTRADITION TO THE UNITED STATES. HE WAS TRIED AND CONVICTED ON CONSPIRACY CHARGES IN NEW YORK AND SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS IN PRISON. RICORD IS SAID TO HAVE ENGINEERED THE SHIPMENT OF MORE THAN 11,000 POUNDS OF HEROIN INTO THE UNITED STATES WORTH ABOUT \$1.2 BILLION WHOLESALE.

3. THE FACT THAT RICORD WAS EXTRADITED AFTER MONTHS OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND PARAGUAY IS THE UNCLASSIFIED

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MORE SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE PARAGUAY HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN A HAVEN FOR DRUG TRAFFICKERS. HIS EXTRADITION IS AN INDICATION THAT EVEN THE MOST RELUCTANT LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS CAN BE PERSUADED TO COOPERATE WITH THE UNITED STATES ON THE NARCOTICS ISSUE. ROGERS

UNCLASSIFIED NIZE THAT FULL REPORT MIGHT BE MORE BALANCED, WE DO TAKE ISSUE WITH SOME POINTS RAISED IN PARA 3 OF REFTTEL.

(A) OUR BEST INTELLIGENCE IS THAT PERHAPS 2 PERCENT OF HEROIN ON US MARKET IS MEXICAN PRODUCED, ALTHOUGH AN ADDITIONAL QUANTITY UP TO PERHAPS 18 PERCENT MIGHT TRANSIT MEXICO FROM EUROPE.

(B) WE FEEL THAT GOM COOPERATION HAS BEEN GOOD AND THAT WHILE OVERALL FLOW OF DRUGS INTO US MAY BE INCREASING (ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT HAVE PERTINENT STATISTICS) PROBLEM IS MUCH LESS SEVERE THAN IT WOULD BE WERE IT NOT FOR CONTINUING GOM EFFORT.

(C) WE FEEL THAT REMARKS ON GOM ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES ARE INAPPROPRIATE, ESPECIALLY SINCE CODEL EVIDENTLY OVERLOOKED SOME MAJOR GOM INPUTS (SEE BELOW).

(D) COMMENT ON RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MEXICAN FEDERAL AND STATE ENTITIES IS GRATUITOUS AND DEALS WITH PURELY AN INTERNAL MATTER. PERHAPS CODEL REACHED THIS IONCLUSION BASED ON BORDER VISIT; BASED ON MEXICO CITY BRIEFINGS AND CONVERSATIONS, REPORT EVIDENTLY OVERSTATES ANY FRICTIONS WHICH WE PERCEIVE.

(E) WE DOUBT THAT ISSUE RAISED IN PARA 3 F IS PECULIAR TO MEXICO; CERTAINLY HIGH-LEVEL USG MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ENTER OUR OWN COUNTRY WITHOUT RIGOROUS CUSTOMS INSPECTION. FURTHERMORE, WE KNOW OF NO ROUTINE CUSTOMS INSPECTION FOR ANY US CITIZEN DEPARTING THE US.

(F) CONCERNING ALLEGATION OF POLICE CORRUPTION, WE WOULD NOTE RECENT ACTIVITY IN CIUDAD JUAREZ (SEE MEXICO 1685) AND FJP REORGANIZATION DISCUSSED WITH CODEL MURPHY AS EVIDENCE OF GOM ACTION TO COMBAT A PROBLEM SEEMINGLY ENDEMIC IN ANTI-NARCOTICS LAW ENFORCEMENT WORLDWIDE.

(G) ON MAJOR TRAFFICKERS WE WOULD DRAW ATTENTION TO THE AUGUST 1972 DEATH IN MEXICO OF LUCIEN SARTI AND
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ARREST OF SEVERAL IMPORTANT ACCOMPLICES, DECEMBER ARREST

OF JORGE ASSAF AND OTHER SIMILAR CASES. RECENT 24- TON MARIJUANA SEIZURE IN SAN LUIS COLORADO (REFERRED TO FAVORABLY IN CODEL REPORT) IS FURTHER INDICATION OF MAJOR ACTIVITY. (THIS IS REPORTEDLY WORLD' S LARGEST SINGLE MARIJUANA HAUL TO DATE.)

(H) IN REFERENCE TO STATEMENT CONTAINED IN PARA 3 J OF REFTEL, EMBASSY IS NOT PRIVY TO CODEL' S INFORMATION ON WHICH CONCLUSION BASED; IF FULL REPORT CONTAINS ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE, WE WILL BE PLEASED TO RELAY THIS TO PROPER GOM AUTHORITIES WHO, AS EXPLAINED TO CODEL, REPEATEDLY HAVE ASSURED US OF THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ACT AGAINST CORRUPT ELEMENTS (AS THEY IN FACT HAVE DONE.)

6. BASED ON REFTEL, IT ALSO APPEARS THAT CODEL MAY HAVE OVERLOOKED SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT FACETS OF ANTI-NARCOTICS
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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE055494
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: KNROGERS: DEB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: CORE6
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730340/aaaaikme.tel
Line Count: 131
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Nov-2001 by elbezefj>; APPROVED <01 MAR 2002 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> srp 980106
Subject: CONGRESSIONAL NARCOTICS REPORT ISSUED
TAGS: SNAR, PA
To: ASUNCION
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005